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## THE ROUND TABLE

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### DISCOVERING HUMAN INTERESTS

Anyone who will take the trouble to glance through the appended list of subjects of talks given by Richmond Hill boys and girls during the past semester will not need to be told that through the agency of these talks the teacher in charge of the sections where the talks were given discovered unmistakably the bents of a number of the students. By knowing what the boys and girls were interested in apart from book work—for all the talks were on subjects selected by the pupils without consultation with the teacher—the instructor learned how to be of best service to those under his care. In what ways in particular cases this was accomplished will not be of interest to teachers in general. It may be, however, that this sort of thing, adapted to local conditions, may prove elsewhere of the same degree of benefit it has been at the school where tried. There is nothing more delightful as part of the English teacher's school life than to feel that he is actually in touch with the real human interests of the boys and girls in his classes. There is no way better calculated to discover these vital interests than by such a plan as is here briefly outlined.

Assign the speakers to their particular days about a week in advance. Announce that the talk should be several minutes in duration. Tell the pupils to select some subject in which they themselves feel a decided interest. Explain that the speaker should be ready to answer questions put to him by the audience at the close of the talk. The less machinery there is about the affair the better it will be for all concerned.

Some boys and girls soon develop into the experts of the class on particular subjects. Whenever during the term the subject of air locomotion comes up, we expect aid from our well-known expert, Fred ————. Whenever woman suffrage appears on the horizon, we can be sure that Eliza ———— will know all that is worth while in her field. As for athletic sports, the expert in that line is many-headed, for most of the boys know teams and players and records. We had great fun one day when one boy in a class of boys presumed to talk on the Olympic meet, and had to give way before the battery of questions from boys who offhand knew more about the subject than he

did after looking it up. Actually it seems foolish to say so, but we laughed till we cried at the grotesque records which the speaker tried to present to his audience in answer to questions about what so-and-so could do in the high jump and so-and-so in the hurdles. Everybody, including the speaker, was so good-natured about the matter that no one felt hurt. So there grows up and clusters around the talking-time at the beginning of the recitation a series of mutual recollections and memories, even a group of traditions, sure to make that portion of the recitation period one of pleasant anticipation happily realized day by day by all the class, including the speaker.

This is just one of the manifestations of the idea of games or sports in the English class. Of teakettle in studying homonyms and the giving of the password, etc., perhaps more anon.

#### TOPICS OF STUDENTS AS REPORTED BY THE CLASS SECRETARIES

##### SECOND-SEMESTER STUDENTS

*Captains Courageous*; The Necessity of Keeping Children at School as long as Possible; Child Labor; *A Strange Cruise*; Physical Training; Prevention of Cruelty to Animals; Model Aeroplanes; *With Lafayette at Yorktown*; Divers; The Going-down of the "Titanic"; Aeroplanes in War; *Under Lawton at Luzon*; Catching Baboons; Long Words; *Five Thousand Miles Underground*; Compartments for Submarines in Battleships; Motor Boats; The Princeton Meet; *Tom Swift and His Submarine*; The New Moving-Picture Plan; Baseball; The Sinking of the "Maine"; Rabbit-Hunting; The Two Great Walkers; Choice of Guns; The Coal-Strike; The Business-Side of a Circus; The Increase in Motor Trucks; Farm Life; The Olympic Games; The New Bandstand in Indianapolis; *Huckleberry Finn*; *Dick Rodney*; Aims in Life; Descriptive and Narrative Talk; Conservation of Forests; Baseball in Cuba; Grammatical Talk; Aims in Life; The New Calendar and Clock Proposition; Shakespeare; The Change of Climate in Alaska.

##### SEVENTH-SEMESTER STUDENTS

The Advantage of Having a Profession; The Panama Canal; Girard College; Music and the Piano; What Wide Reading Does for You; Painting; *The Garden of Allah*; A Town in Africa; Pigeons; How to Make Caramels; Charles B. Loomis; Brass-Craft; Playgrounds on the Piers; The Baking of a Cake; A Trip to Pennsylvania; The Manufacture of Briar Pipes; The Delights of Swimming; Cooking Cookies; Examination Questions; Milton, the Classical Student; *Il Trovatore*; Fine Needle Work; A Bank That Is Run by Women; Pyrography; An Excursion of the History Club; Amateur Photography; Baseball; Making Peanut Brittle; Making "Penuchi"; Scootering; My Present Aims in Life; The Preservation of Wood; Are *L'Allegro* and *Il Pen-*

*seroso* Complements or Opposites? Masques; My Aims in Life; How to Make Paper Wistaria; Immigration; *Winning of Barbara Worth*; A Trip to Ellis Island; Trees in Forest Park; Milton; The Arc Light; Two Modern Advertisements; An Incident; Development of Richmond Hill; The Metropolitan Art Museum; Charlie the Fire Horse; Nassau Boulevard Aviation Meet; *Rebecca of Sunnysbrook Farm*; A Court Room; The Founding of the First Woman's College; A Day Spent in Dutch New York; A Quaker Meeting House; Princeton College; A Modern Dairy Farm; Schiller's Birthplace; The Back of a Stage; Washington's Mt. Vernon Home; *Barbara Winslow, Rebel*; Argumentative Talk on "Life"; Taking Pictures [illustrated]; How to Make Fudge; Talk on Longfellow; Improvements in Forest Park.

#### EIGHTH-SEMESTER STUDENTS

The Bad Effects of Education; A Trip to the Brooklyn Navy Yard; The Passing of the Peanut Roaster; Some Uses of the Spectroscope; Class Activities; The Ice Industry; The Birds of Forest Park; The Cornell Domestic Science Course; A Reason Why Shakespeare Really Wrote the Works Credited to Him; Color Photography; Why the Continents Don't Sink; Recommendation of Mark Twain's *Innocence Abroad*; Professionals Should Not Be Debarred from Participating in High-School and College Athletics; Recommendation of E. B. Oppenheim's *The Master Mummer*; St. Patrick's Friendship to Ireland; Examination Questions on Macaulay's Johnson; There Should Be Enough Life Boats on Every Vessel to Accommodate All Passengers; The Sinking of the "Maine" and the "Maine" Memorial; Novel Party Decorations; The New Stepless Street Car; Application to Life of Lessons Learned from Literature Studied during the Fourth Year in High School; The Tree-Planting Association; Summary of a Lecture on India; How to Make Bread and Butter; A Class Reunion (speech for a class spread).

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#### SOME CAUSES OF BAD ENGLISH IN THE UNITED STATES

"The United States people," said an English woman, "do not speak English. They speak American, like which there is no language on earth."

She was partially correct; but if she should visit America, she would find the American language of the East very different from that of the West; that of the North, from that of the South; and that of the center, from any of the cardinal points. These local differences explain the resentment of the Boston girl when an Englishman told her that the Americans drop as many letters as possible, and use slang whenever they